(a) whether the Privatization of "Palace on Wheels" has been under the consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, what is the decision if any taken in this regard; stating the reasons for privatizing the "Palace on Wheels"?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Conversion of Hospet-Hubli Metre Gauge Section

1285. SHRI J. P. JAVALI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether sanction has been granted for conversion of Hospet-Hubli metre gauge section;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this conversion will be beneficial to Hubli Workshop and also whether Hubli will have a broad gauge link with all the major centres of the country; and

(d) what action is being considered to accord top priority to the 144 kilometres, Hospet-Hubli broad gauge conversion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work of conversion of Hospet-Hubli-Goa (with linked finger) 489 kms. has been sanctioned and included in the Budget of 92-93. The work is estimated to cost Rs. 312.00 crores.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The work on long lead items like land and bridges have been taken up. Conversion of Hospet-Hubli has been planned to be completed by 95-96, subject to availability of resources.

Female Staff in Railway Board

1286. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether working timings in Railway Board are from 9.00 AM to 5.30 PM.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether 85 per cent female staff leave their offices between 4.00 PM to 4.30 PM daily;

(d) whether remaining 15 per cent female staff leave there offices at 5.00 PM daily;

(e) whether female staff get equal pay and have equal avenues of promotion with male staff of Railway Board;

(f) whether no attendance checks have been made in the evening timings during January to July, 1993 to check the tendency of leaving offices as in (c) and (d) amongst female staff; and

(g) if so, reasons therefor and action to be taken against officials of administration for creating inferiority complex amongst male staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The working timings in Railway Board are from 9.00 AM to 5.30 PM with lunch break from 1.00 PM to 1.30 PM.

(c) and (d) No. Sir.

(e) Yes, Sir

(f) Attendance checks have been conducted in the evening timings also during January to July, 1993.

(g) Does not arise.

Abortion leave for women employees of Railway and Railway Board

1287. SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether abortion leave is granted to women employees of Railway and Railway Board;

(b) if so, the number of such employees separately for zone-wise and Railway Board availed of this facility during each month from January to July, 1993;

(c) whether a large number of some women employees having three children of Railway Board have availed of this leave in the past in addition to availing of such leave during 1993;

(d) if so, the number of such employees cadre-wise with details of such relevant rules prescribing no children limit and no time limit; and